

Message Text

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67

ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 NIC-01 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-10 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-14 USIA-04 SAJ-01 DRC-01 /071 W

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R 081410Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0715

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LISBON 4339

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PO, PINT

SUBJ: COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS SET FOR OCTOBER 20

REF: LISBON 3991

1. ACCORDING TO THE LISBON PRESS, THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY, MEETING OCTOBER 6, DECIDED TO CONVOKE AN EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS OF THE PARTY ON OCTOBER 20 IN ORDER TO APPROVE MODIFICATIONS IN THE PARTY PROGRAM IN VIEW OF THE NEW POLITICAL SITUATION SINCE APRIL 25 AND THE NEW TASKS BEFORE THE PARTY. THE PARTY CONGRESS WILL BE ONLY THE SECOND LEGAL ONE (THE LAST WAS IN NOVEMBER 1923) AND THE FIRST SINCE THE 6TH CONGRESS IN 1965.

2. COMMENT: NEITHER THE OFFICIAL PCP ORGAN AVANTE NOR ANY OTHER PORTUGUESE NEWSPAPER GAVE NY ADVANCE NOTICE THAT A PARTY CONGRESS WAS IN THE WORKS, WHICH NATURALLY LEADS ONE TO SPECULATE THAT THE DECISION WAS A SUDDEN ONE, AND PROBABLY NOT TAKEN BEFORE THE EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 28-30.

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ONE WELL-PLACED PERSONE HAS TOLD US THAT HE HAS HEARD THAT

THE FORCES WITHIN THE PCP ALLIED WITH OCTAVIO PATO HAVE BEEN PRESSING FOR THE PARTY TO HOLD A CONGRESS BEFORE THE SCHEDULED MARCH ELECTIONS, AND THAT CUNHAL HAS BEEN HOLDING OUT FOR THE CONGRESS TO BE HELD AFTER THE ELECTIONS. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION WHY THESE RESPECTIVE POSITIONS ARE ALLEGEDLY HELD.

3. RUMORS OF GROWING DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE PCP SURFACED WELL BEFORE THE RECENT RIGHTWING RESURGENCE. THESE RUMORS GAVE AS THE MAIN PROTAGONISTS ALVARO CUNHAL AND EITHER CARLOS ABOIM INGLES OR OCTAVIO PATO. THE DIVISIVE ISSUES ALLEGEDLY WERE OVER WHETHER OR NOT PORTUGAL WAS IN A PRE-REVOLUTIONARY STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT, OVER LABOR TACTICS, AND BETWEEN THOSE EXILED AND THOSE WHO STAYED AND FOUGHT UNDERGROUND IN PORTUGAL DURING THE LEAN YEARS. IF IN FACT LATENT DIFFERENCES DO EXIST WITHIN THE PCP, WE EXPECT THAT THE EVENTS OF LAST WEEK WOULD GIVE EACH CURRENT MORE TO ARGUE OVER; ONE WOULD EXPECT THOSE WHO BELIEVED THE PARTY WAS IN A PREREVOLUTIONARY ERA TO BE STRENGTHENED AS A RESULT OF THE APPARENT DEFEAT SUFFERED BY THE RIGHT (MANY OF WHOSE LEADERS ARE JAILED AND THREE OF WHOSE PARTIES HAVE BEEN PUT OUT OF ACTION AT LEAST TEMPORARILY). THOSE WHO HOLD THIS VIEW WOULD BE OPPOSED BY CUNHAL, WHO IS MOST LIKELY UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM MOSCOW NOT TO ALLOW DEVELOPMENTS TO GO SO FAR AS TO THREATEN BROADER SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS SUCH AS DETENTE WITH THE USG.

4. WHILE WE DO NOT HAVE PROOF THAT SUCH INTERNAL CONFLICTS IN FACT EXIST, LOGIC WOULD SUGGEST THAT THERE ARE INTERNAL DIFFERENCES OVER STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP CADRES, AND THAT THE ABORTIVE RIGHTWING OFFENSIVE HAS WIDENED THESE DIFFERENCES. THE SUDDEN PARTY CONGRESS MAY HAVE BEEN CALLED TO RESOLVE THESE DIFFERENCES, ALTHOUGH LACK OF INFORMATION MAKES A FIRM JUDGMENT IMPOSSIBLE. THE PUBLICATION OF THE DECISIONS OF THE CONGRESS MAY REVEAL WHETHER OR NOT THIS ANALYSIS IS CORRECT.
SCOTT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMMUNISTS, MEETINGS, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: elyme
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LISBON04339
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740285-0714
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741064/aaaaccre.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: LISBON 3991
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <11 MAR 2003 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS SET FOR OCTOBER 20
TAGS: PINT, PO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005